

## Recruitment, Retention and Payroll: Human Resources

*By Sonja Gross, Community Relations Coordinator*



***From left: Dee Burks, Training Coordinator; Alesia Grist, Assistant HR Director; Viola Frausto, Recruitment/Selection Coordinator; Josie Griego-Smith, Administrative Assistant; Ashley Orr, HR Generalist; Jana McCarley, Administrative Tech; Cassandra Garcia, Administrative Assistant; Clifton Beck, HR Director; Hannah Kaspar, Intern; and Tiffany Pifer, Administrative Assistant.***

Do you have a situation at your work site that just can't seem to get resolved? Do you need to make changes to your payroll information? Do you need help interpreting policies and procedures? Are you having difficulty navigating job posting requirements and have questions? Perhaps you're looking to retire. Are you having personal problems and need more information about the Employee Assistance Program? Or do you just need to vent and want an ear?

Those are just a handful of the services offered by the Human Resources Department at the City of Amarillo.

"We're here to serve you, to help," says Human Resources Director Clifton Beck. "The employees are our customers, but a lot of employees are surprised when they have an encounter with Human Resources other than being hired."

Human Resources is responsible for not only recruitment, but compensation, retirement benefits, personnel procedures, personal

matters and so much more. They coordinate the Employee Appreciation Luncheons, Quarter Century Club Banquet and the Employee Newsletter – and they do it all with only seven full-time employees and two part-time employees.

"It's not nearly enough," Beck says. "It would be beneficial to the employees if we could have a generalist at some outlying locations like the River Road and Hollywood Road wastewater treatment plants and even at the Amarillo Police Department. This would let employees know they have an advocate without having to come all the way to City Hall."

Once several departments relocate from City Hall to the Simms Municipal Building, Human Resources will move to the first floor of City Hall. Beck says plans are for the first floor to include two state-of-the-art training rooms, which would allow the City to bring more training and development in-house as it's a big part of Human Resources.

New Employee Orientation is conducted twice a month. Right now, the orientation only lasts just over half a day with various departments sharing pertinent information.

"We would like to eventually offer a tour of the City's facilities including the landfill, service center, the water treatment and wastewater treatment plants and others so employees know the breadth of services the City offers beyond their own department," Beck says.

He adds that the Amarillo City Council has approved moving forward with a comprehensive compensation/classification study.

"We've heard the cry as it relates to wages," Becks says. "We're working with the Purchasing Department to eventually select a firm to conduct a study that everyone will take part in, from its kickoff to questionnaires to follow-up interviews."

***(continued on Page 6)***

# Making the Most Important Workplace Call: 911

By Terry Bavousett, Interim Manager, AECC



Most people will call 911 only once or twice during their lifetimes. Calling for help is usually as easy as dialing 911, but getting the right help requires several pieces of very important information in order to get the right help to you as quickly as possible. Being fully prepared when you dial 911 during a life-threatening emergency can make the difference between life and death, and it's not always as easy you might think.

911 calls in the City of Amarillo are answered at the Amarillo Emergency Communication Center (AECC). When calling 911 in Amarillo, you can expect the following three questions in this exact order:

1. Amarillo 911, what is the location of your emergency?
2. What's the phone number you're calling from?
3. Can you tell me exactly what happened?

It may seem odd to ask for the location and phone number before asking about the emergency. The location and phone number are the most important pieces of information just in case the call is disconnected – and that happens more than you might think. Critical calls such as chest pain and structure fires are immediately dispatched after the first three questions have been answered, even though the Calltaker will continue gathering additional information to assist the Fire, Police or EMS responders en route to the scene. The additional questions don't delay getting responders on the way.

Unfortunately, it's not unusual for AECC to receive emergency calls involving city employees. There are a lot of City of Amarillo facilities, including large buildings, with multiple entrances. The information you provide is very important.

## Calls from City of Amarillo Phones

It is extremely important to report the exact address where you are located including the floor and office (if applicable) and the best entrance for responders to use. Have someone meet the responders at an outside door, if possible. Calls from some locations will appear to be coming from City Hall or the Police Department even though the emergency may be at a different address. An example is that calls from the Central Library and Civic Center appear to be coming from City Hall. Giving poor or no directions to give your exact location may delay the responders getting to the scene. City IT Telecom staff are working to upgrade equipment to provide improved location reporting, but it is not an easy quick fix.

## Dialing 911

Making it easier to dial 911 from inside switchboard systems is a high priority across the United States including the City of Amarillo. Phones at City Hall, Service Center, Facilities Administration, Simms Building, Civic Center, Globe-News Center, Public Health, Downtown Library, Police Department, Municipal Court and Fire Administration can now dial 911 directly, or by dialing 8 and then 911. City phones that do not require an 8 to get an outside line can dial 911 directly.

Other locations that require the user to dial 8 to get an outside line will have to dial 8 and then 911. If you are unsure what is required to call 911 from your work location, please consider testing the system as described on the next page:

*(continued on Page 3)*



# Calling 911

*(continued from Page 2)*

## Information for when you're not at work ...

Cell phones now account for about 80 percent of the calls received at AECC. The dispatch center receives only an estimated location for cell phones. High population areas such as apartments, public gathering spaces and large buildings such as the Chase Tower are sometimes very challenging to locate. Non-activated cell phones are still capable of calling 911 if powered up. The 911 dispatch center cannot call back a non-activated cell phone because it has no phone number assigned. Please take the battery out if you give an old cell phone to children. 911 centers get MANY calls from children playing with old cell phones.

Residential landline (wired) phones are the best way to call 911 because landlines usually report an exact location, but many people no longer have landline phones at home.

Landline business phones may or may not be accurate depending on how the system is set up. It is not unusual for switchboard phone systems to report the location of the switchboard even though some phones may be located at different locations.

Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) services such as Vonage and Magic Jack are accurate only if the user updates the information with the service. A person can set up Vonage or Magic Jack for use in Amarillo then take the device on vacation or move to a new city. Calling 911 under these circumstances may report the wrong City, State or even Country. The devices will work anywhere there is a good internet connection.

## 911 Test Calls

Always get clearance from the AECC on-duty Supervisor before making 911 test calls. Test calls are only permitted during times of low call volume to ensure that lines remain available for emergency calls. Call the AECC Supervisor line at 378-9053 and ask if the call volume is low enough to allow a 911 test call from a city phone.

If given permission, hang up and immediately dial 911. If the call doesn't go through, try again by dialing 8911. Tell the Calltaker that you are testing 911 from your work phone and ask what location is being displayed. Write down clear directions for getting to your work area including the address and then share the information with your co-workers.

The written directions for getting responders to your location quickly may save someone's life and it could even be you.

# Heroic Efforts Recognized

*By Cpl. Jerry Neufeld, Amarillo Police Department*

Two Amarillo Police Officers were honored earlier this month for their heroic efforts in saving a newborn's life. On Monday, Oct. 5 just after 10 p.m., officers responded to a call and when they arrived, they learned that a mother had just given birth to a baby boy, but the baby was not breathing. Officers could see the baby was very pale blue in color with no signs of life.

Officers Michael Fenwick and Bryan Gaitan immediately began performing emergency CPR on the child. On first attempt, the child was not firm enough to successfully deliver chest compressions. Officers then placed the child on a sturdier surface and began delivering chest compressions. They were able to get a pulse on the newborn. However, the child was still not breathing on its own. Officers continued emergency first aid until Amarillo Medical Services and Amarillo Fire Department personnel arrived and took over. The child was transported to a local hospital and admitted into the Neonatal ICU.

Although the baby passed away a few days later due to complications from its delivery, the efforts of the police officers did not go unnoticed. Police Chief Robert Taylor presented Officers Fenwick and Gaitan with the Amarillo Police Department's Life Saving Award. This is Officer Fenwick's first Life Saving Award. He has been with the department for nearly three years. Officer Gaitan received a Medal of Valor Award for his efforts in the active shooter incident in Dimmit, Texas in May of this year and this is his first Life Saving Award. Gaitan has been with the department for almost four years.



*Top picture: Officer Fenwick, Life Saving Award recipient  
Bottom picture: Chief Robert Taylor (right) presents Officer Gaitan with the Life Saving Award.*

## SAFETY CORNER: Slip, Trip and Fall Prevention

By David Sanchez, Safety Coordinator

As fall and winter weather approach, we must pay close attention to changing conditions. We must think of safety at all times. Slips, trips and falls account for 15 percent of all accidental deaths, second only to automobile fatalities. Slips, trips and falls are the most frequent accidents leading to personal injury.

What is the difference between a slip, trip or fall? Very little, if you are the victim. The pain is the same, so it really doesn't matter which of the three caused your accident, right? Actually, though, there really are some significant differences.

Slips occur when there is too little

friction or traction between your feet and the walking surface. The most common causes of slips are wet surfaces, ice or other weather hazards,



spills and poor tread on footwear. Preventive measures include:

- Wet surfaces: Shorten your stride, walk with feet pointed out

slightly, and make wider turns.

- Spills: Clean up immediately.
- Weather hazards: Walk more slowly so you can react to traction changes and dry off shoes as soon as practical after entering a building (wet shoes on dry floors are as dangerous as dry shoes on wet floors).
- Poor tread on footwear: Wear slip resistant footwear.

Trips commonly occur when your foot strikes an object and your momentum throws you off balance. To

minimize the potential for this type of injury:

- Do not allow carried packages to obstruct your view.
- Use only proven walkways.
- Close desk and file drawers when not in use.
- Inspect and report any uneven surface conditions, sidewalks, or handrails.

Falls usually take place from one level to another. One of the most common examples of this type of injury involves falling down stairs. Another involves using chairs as ladders. Preventive measures include:

- NEVER stand on a chair to reach a high object. Always use a ladder.
- When using ladders, select the proper type and size, and use it properly.
- Walk up and down stairs, and never jump from the last step.
- Use handrails. Make sure you have three points of contact when walking up or down stairs.

The best walking surfaces and ideal weather conditions won't be of any help if you do not follow safety guidelines.

**"REMEMBER YOUR TRAINING AND TAKE SAFETY HOME"**

## EMPLOYEE MILESTONES

NAME	DEPARTMENT	TITLE	YEARS
Brandon Campsey	IT Infrastructure & Support	IT Analyst	5
Cassandra Perez	AECC	Emergency Comm. Specialist	5
Rashel Torrez	AECC	Comm. Shift Supervisor	5
Eric Ozier	Airport Operations	Airport Facilities Supervisor	5
Joshua Schreur	IT Infrastructure & Support	IT Analyst	5
Joseph Mendoza	Traffic Field Operations	Traffic Control Technician	10
Michelle Ramirez	Traffic Field Operations	Administrative Assistant II	10
Kila Moore	Library	Administrative Assistant I	10
Donald Mansel	Surface Water Treatment	Treatment Plant Maint. Foreperson	10
Kiley Navarrete	Airport Operations	Administrative Technician	15
Darla Dabney	Library	Administrative Assistant I	15
Jerry Taylor	Civic Center Operations	Building Attendant II	20
Richard Anderson	Police	Sergeant	25
Martin Birkenfeld Jr.	Police	Captain	25
Gerardo Bribiesca Jr.	Police	Sergeant	25
Keith Cargo	Police	Corporal	25
Billy Haden	Police	Corporal	25
David James	Police	Sergeant	25
Larry Plumlee	Police	Corporal	25
Jimmie Rifenberg	Police	Police Officer	25
Jason Zang	Police	Lieutenant	25

# Fall Fire Safety

*By Capt. Larry Davis, Public Information Officer  
Amarillo Fire Department*

As we head into the holiday season and colder weather, we need to remember some basic safety tips:

- Always keep a three foot safety zone around any heating equipment. Fireplaces, wall furnaces, floor furnaces and portable electric heaters should have a three foot area around them clear of any flammable items. Be sure to keep pets and children away from these areas as well.
- During the holidays we may have a lot of friends and family in our homes. Please keep children supervised! Never leave children alone in a room with a lit candle. When you are cooking, a hot stove, pots and pans full of hot liquid, sharp knives and electrical appliances can all be hazardous to children. So, while you are cooking, make your kitchen a “kid free zone.”
- Remember to never leave cooking unattended, even while cooking your Thanksgiving turkey. Thanksgiving is the leading day of the year for home fires related to cooking!
- Last, be sure your smoke alarms are working! Test them monthly by pushing the test button on the alarm.



## FROM THE PANTRY: Corn Soup

*Submitted by Margaret Payton, MBA, RD*

- 4 cups corn, fresh, canned or frozen
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 stalks celery, finely chopped
- 1 green or red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 small potato, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 chili pepper, finely chopped (optional)
- 1 tablespoon flour
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 5 cups chicken broth, low sodium
- Shredded cheese for garnish



Melt the butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion, celery, bell pepper, and potato, and then stir to combine. Cover the pot and cook for 5 minutes. Remove lid from pot and add garlic and chili pepper. Stir vegetables; use a little water or chicken broth if vegetables begin to stick to pot. Let vegetables cook, stirring occasionally, for another 5 minutes. They should be lightly browned and soft, although potato will not be fully cooked. Add the corn and flour to pot and stir. Add chicken broth and stir to boil. Turn heat down and simmer for 30 minutes until broth thickens and potatoes are tender. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

*Serves 6.*

*Calories 130, Fat 3g, Sodium 90 mg, Carbohydrates 26 g, Fiber 3 g, Protein 6 g.*



# PROMOTIONS/TRANSFERS FOR OCTOBER 2015

NAME	OLD TITLE	OLD DEPARTMENT	NEW TITLE	NEW DEPARTMENT
Jennifer Freel	Accounting Assistant	Accounting	Accountant I	Accounting
Jessica Valenzuela	Accountant I	Accounting	Accountant III	Accounting
Matthew Railsback	Utility Worker	Street	Equipment Operator II	Street
Luis Sisneros	Utility Worker - hrly	Street	Utility Worker	Street
James Murray	Utility Worker - hrly	Street	Utility Worker	Street
Jonathan Griffey	Utility Worker	Street	Transfer Truck Driver	Solid Waste Disposal
George Brenes	Corporal	Police	Sergeant	Police
Evan Burner	Officer	Police	Corporal	Police
Devin Cantwell	Officer	Police	Corporal	Police
Clay Hegwood	Officer	Police	Corporal	Police
Alvin Hill III	Corporal	Police	Sergeant	Police
Troy Roberson	Corporal	Police	Sergeant	Police
Eric Vaughn	Officer	Police	Corporal	Police
Jamie Fischer-Kosk	Event Coordinator - hrly	Parks & Recreation	Event Coordinator	Parks & Recreation
Joe Carter	Park Technician I	Park Maintenance	Park Technician II	Park Maintenance
Mary Gardner	Park Technician I	Park Maintenance	Park Technician II	Park Maintenance
Cathy Hughes	Utility Worker	Park Maintenance	Park Technician I	Park Maintenance
Walter Miller	Utility Worker - hrly	Park Maintenance	Park Irrigation Technician	Park Maintenance
Daniel Terrell	Utility Worker	Park Maintenance	Park Technician I	Park Maintenance
Delia Vazquez	Utility Worker	Park Maintenance	Park Technician I	Park Maintenance
Eric Roberts	Fire Driver	Fire	Lieutenant	Fire
Chanse Valentine	Firefighter	Fire	Fire Driver	Fire
Terry Herndon	Management Analyst	Public Health	Health Planner	Public Health
Jerry Cole	Utility Worker - hrly	Water Transmission	Utility Worker	Water Production
Arturo Arcos	Meter Service Rep.	Water Distribution	Utility Operator	Water Distribution
Arthur Hartwell	Utility Worker	Water Distribution	Utility Operator	Water Distribution
Jose Lira	Utility Worker	Wastewater Collection	Odor Control Technician	Wastewater Collection

## Human Resources

*(continued from Page 1)*

Beck hopes his department is a true resource for employees.

"In the event you have an issue that can't get resolved after following the chain-of-command on-site, come to Human Resources," Beck says. "We are the neutral third party that works with both sides to come to an amicable solution."

Beck adds that he invites employees to come to City Hall, to call, or even e-mail Human Resources with their questions, concerns and suggestions.

"Are there deficiencies we're not aware of? What do we need to work on? What can we do better?" Beck asks. "I want to hear feedback."



**FIND US HERE!**



# WELCOME TO THE CITY OF AMARILLO!

NAME	DEPARTMENT	POSITION
Manivanh Keomany	Custodian I	Facilities
Sheryal Scott	Custodian I	Facilities
Gary Sain	Building Mechanic II	Facilities
Jose Romero	Utility Worker	Street
Scott Jones	Utility Worker	Solid Waste Collection
John Thompson	Utility Worker	Solid Waste Collection
Jeffrey Torres	Residential Equip. Operator	Solid Waste Collection
Danny Amero	Commercial Equip. Operator	Solid Waste Collection
Samantha Hernandez	Animal Mgt. Officer Trainee	AAM&W
Virgil Martinez	School Crossing Guard	Traffic Administration
Lynn Brown	School Crossing Guard	Traffic Administration
Valeni Bloemker	Plans Examiner	Building Safety
Mark Casey	Building Inspector I	Building Safety
Carlos Chavez	Bus Driver	Transit
Adam Madrid	Utility Worker - hrly	Ross Rogers Golf Course
Codie Ivins	Park Maintenance Mechanic	Park Maintenance
Diane Durham	Park Maintenance Mechanic	Park Maintenance
Brittany Lake	Animal Attendant	Zoo
Addie Treider	Housing Technician	Community Development
Cassandra Martin	WIC Technician I	WIC
Susan Cortez	WIC Technician II	WIC
Hagan Massie	Meter Reader - hrly	Utility Billing
Pam Mendez	Admin. Assistant - hrly	Utility Billing
Jerry Cole	Utility Worker	Water Production
Wyshanna Booker	Utility Worker	Water Distribution
Curtis Mills	Utility Worker	Water Distribution
Bobby Perez	Utility Worker	Water Distribution
Cecil Jackson	Utility Worker	Wastewater Collection
Wesly Wagner	Electrician I	Hollywood Rd. WWT Plant
Jorge Rodriguez	Custodian I	Dept. of Aviation
Guadalupe Rojas	Custodian I	Dept. of Aviation
Matthew Sanchez	Custodian I	Dept. of Aviation
David Thurmon	Security Operations Agent	Dept. of Aviation
Rodolfo Elizondo	Utility Worker	Drainage Utility
Shawn Tortella	IT Coordinator	IT
Jussten Craddock	Teller	City Federal Credit Union
Krystal Linn	Library Assistant	Library
<b>www.amarillo.gov</b>		



## Darrell W. Johnson

30 years  
AFD

## Rick Cognasi

23 years  
Solid Waste

## Henry Baldivia

8 years  
River Road  
Wastewater Treatment Plant

*Congratulations on your retirement!  
Thank you for your commitment to the  
City of Amarillo!*

## Smile Of The Month



## Lisa Kelley

Inventory Clerk I  
Central Stores

**PUBLICATION POLICY:**

The ACE newsletter is distributed by the City Secretary's office monthly through e-mail, print copies and the City's Intranet site. It is designed to help keep you informed of events and accomplishments throughout the organization you serve. If you have ideas for future stories, features or photo opportunities, or to receive this newsletter electronically, contact:

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Items must be received no later than the first Friday of each month to make that month's edition.

All items are subject to space availability and edited for appropriateness.

**CITY OF AMARILLO**

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Amarillo, TX 79105-1971

## Local Teens Gain Experience as Attorneys

*By Karla Abernethy-Thetford, Juvenile Services Coordinator, Municipal Court*

Fall has been a busy time of year at Amarillo Teen Court as Amarillo ISD students joined the program as Teen Attorneys, representing juvenile offenders. Eleven students attended the October attorney training session. The future law and criminal justice professionals learned about the court system, terms and court process.

During Teen Court, each student was assigned a case and given only limited time to prepare opening and closing statements as well as questions for the defendant. The case is heard by a Teen Court jury and judge. The jury then determines sentencing based

on the case presented. Sentencing is a combination of community service hours, jury terms and Teen Court classes. The offender has 90 days to complete the sentencing conditions.

The Attorney Program is designed to provide an opportunity for students interested in law and the criminal justice system to gain experience in the field. They are trained by local attorneys and judges and monitored by the Juvenile Services Coordinator of the Amarillo Municipal Court. There are plans to establish a scholarship fund for future student attorneys as well as participant in a state competition for Teen Court Attorneys.

Late last month, Amarillo Teen Court hosted the Teen Court Association of Texas Conference – the association's first visit to the panhandle. We have highlights of their visit in next month's issue of ACE.

**Volunteer!**

The Amarillo Teen Court welcomes applications for adult and teen volunteers. Positions needed are: adult court clerk, adult jury monitor, teen juror, and teen bailiff. Anyone interested in volunteering or needing further information should call the Teen Court office at (806) 378-4224.